

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 DHA-02 ORM-02 SAJ-01 VO-03 SCA-01 /089 W

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R 051357Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TORUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6524

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L 0647

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS PFOR RO

SUBJECT: EMIGRATION: CONVERSATION WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR

REF: BUCHAREST 0534

1. IN CONVERSATION TODAY WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR COHEN HE REPORTED APPROXIMATELY 300 DEPARTURES FOR ISRAEL DURING JANUARY. IN CONTRAST FIGURE FOR DECEMBER WAS APPROXIMATELY 125 PERSONS.

2. AMBASSADOR COHEN AGREES WITH OUR ANALYSIS THAT MAJOR FACTOR INHIBITING EMIGRATION ACTIVITY IN DECEMBER WAS GOR PREOCCUPATION WITH CLOSING BOOKS ON BOTH END OF YEAR AND LAST FIVE-YEAR PLAN (PARA 4 REFTEL). HE IS LESS CERTAIN OF REASONS FOR SHARP UPSURGE IN JANUARY. IN PART HE ASCRIBES THIS TO A DRAW DOWN OF WHAT HE TERMED "RESERVES", MEANING PEOPLE WHO FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER HAD DELAYED THEIR DEPARTURE AFTER RECEIVING APPROVAL TO EMIGRATE. HE WOULD NOT SPECULATE ON THE SIZE OF THIS POOL OF "RESERVES", BUT IMPLIED IT WAS NOT SIGNIFICANT FIGURE. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO REITERATED THESIS HE SHARES WITH RABBI ROSEN THAT IT IS A MISTAKE TO PLACE SOCIAL EMPHASIS ON EXIT FIGURES FOR SHORT TERM PERIODS, WHETHER THEY BE HIGH OR LOW. TREND IS WHAT COUNTS.

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3. HE IS DISAPPOINTED BY 1975 RESULTS (APPROX 2,000 PERSONS), BUT SAYS HE HAS NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THIS IMPLIES ANY FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN GOR POLICY. IT REMAINS "NOT EASY" FOR JEWS TO LEAVE, HE SAID, BUT THAT IS NOTHING NEW. THE MORE RELEVANT QUESTION IS HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING TO LEAVE. ON THAT ONE HE SAYS HE FRANKLY DOESN'T KNOW.

4. AMBASSADOR COHEN MENTIONED TWO DISQUIETING ELEMENTS. HE SAID APPLICANTS WERE REPORTING INCREASE IN PETTY BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES IN APPLICATION PROCESS. PRINCIPAL NEW BARRIER IS INTERVIEWS BY SCREENING COMMITTEES, USUALLY AT PLACE OF WORK BUT SOMETIMES BY NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY COMMITTEE, DURING WHICH EFFORTS ARE MADE TO DISSUADE APPLICANTS FROM INTENTION TO EMIGRATE. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WE ARE HEARING SIMILAR REPORTS FROM PERSONS ATTEMPTING TO EMIGRATE TO US. AMBASSADOR COHEN ALSO SAID THERE WERE AGAIN ISOLATED INSTANCES OF A REPORTED SHORTAGE OF APPLICATION FORMS.

5. SO FAR AS HE IS AWARE THERE ARE NO SPECIAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO ROMANIAN JEWS IN ISRAEL WISHING TO RETURN TO ROMANIA (PARA 2 REFTEL). HE SAID ROMANIAN EMIGRE "ABSORPTION RATE" IN ISRAEL IS BETTER THAN ANY OTHER NATIONAL GROUP. GOI ESTIMATES 8-9 PERCENT OF NEW IMMIGRANTS ARE NOW ANNUALLY RE-EMIGRATING TO OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT ROMANIAN FIGURE IS MUCH LOWER.
VIETS

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